

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Armistead House

Other names/site number: Dora Armistead House; Armistead, Cary Peyton, House; Virginia DHR ID# 137-0142

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: 320 North Henry Street

City or town: Williamsburg State: VA County: Independent City

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national      \_\_\_ statewide      X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

\_\_\_ A      \_\_\_ B      X C      \_\_\_ D

<p>_____  <b>Signature of certifying official/Title:</b>  <u>Virginia Department of Historic Resources</u>  <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>	<p>_____  <b>Date</b></p>
<p>In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.</p>	
<p>_____  <b>Signature of commenting official:</b></p>	<p>_____  <b>Date</b></p>
<p>_____  <b>Title :</b></p>	<p>_____  <b>State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government</b></p>

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#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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#### 5. Classification

##### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

##### Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/hotel/guest house

COMMERCE/TRADE/professional/law office

RECREATION AND CULTURE/museum

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

WORK IN PROGRESS

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN/Queen Anne

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK/CONCRETE; ASPHALT;  
WOOD/Weatherboard

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The Armistead House, variously known over time as the “Dora Armistead House” or the “Cary Peyton Armistead House,” is currently situated at 320 North Henry Street in Williamsburg, Virginia, about two blocks away from Merchant Square in Colonial Williamsburg and very close to the oldest part of the campus of The College of William & Mary. The house is a large, well-preserved, frame, two-and-one-half story, late-nineteenth-century, Queen Anne-style single-family dwelling, with many classic original Victorian-era features. Porches dominate the east façade and south-facing side of the building. Originally, the house consisted of 12 rooms, 4 on each floor. Designed to house the large Armistead family, every room featured a fireplace. A small one-story addition on the west (rear) side was constructed in the 1950s to be used as a modern kitchen. The house was originally constructed in 1890, on the site of the former colonial-era Richard Charlton’s Coffeehouse on Williamsburg’s historic Duke of Gloucester Street, adjacent to the Colonial Capitol Building. The Armistead House was moved to its current location by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation (CWF) in 1995. The new location is outside of the Williamsburg Historic District; however, the building is well sited on a lot in an area with other single-family dwellings of the same period. The original core of the house was relocated in

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its entirety with most of the original interior features intact. Therefore, the house retains a high degree of integrity of design, materials and workmanship.

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## Narrative Description

### Setting:

The new site on North Henry Street is a very appropriate setting for the classic Victorian-era Armistead House. In the immediate area today there are at least 5 houses of the roughly the same era, one next door to the Armistead House and several others on Scotland Street, a short block away. The house sits on a large grassy lot that is dispersed with a few mature trees. Immediately behind the Armistead House lot is a surface parking lot for the nearby shopping area. A wooden picket fence separates the parking lot from the rear yard of the house. There are no secondary resources on the lot.

### Exterior:

East Elevation (front): The house is a rectangular, balloon frame house on a brick foundation, with a Victorian pinnacle at the top of the center gable. It has cedar lap siding on all four sides and has a clipped, side-gable roof with wide eaves. This primary elevation is a symmetrical three-bay façade facing east toward North Henry Street. The first floor façade features a centered, double-leaf entrance door with transom. Across the front is a symmetrical three-bay porch with turned posts and pilasters, spindle work, brackets and a hipped roof with central gable above the entry. The porch is supported by brick piers and has wooden floor decking. This east façade, on the second story, has paired one-over-one windows in the center bay above the porch. The pediments above the front porch and the dormers include ornate sawn work and Gothic Carpentry. The half-story features a large, central, gabled wall dormer with paired windows, which is flanked by two smaller gable dormers, symmetrically placed over the first and second floor windows. The dormer windows have segmental arches topped by flat panel decorative hoods.

The porches, with spindle work and classic spire, are the building's most dominant exterior features. Below the first floor is a partial basement with crawl space. The house has paired, segmentally arched windows in the gable ends. All of the exterior doors, except one leading into the rear addition, are original. There are two interior brick chimneys, symmetrically placed in relation to the clipped gable ends. The chimneys pierce the roof at the ridge and have corbelled caps. They serve multiple fireplaces in the house (one for each principal room), although the flues are now blocked.

North Elevation (side): The north side of the house contains cedar lap siding, and a large rectangular bay window consisting of three double-hung sash ribbon windows, each with one large pane surrounded by smaller panes on the top sash and one large pane on the lower sash. This window configuration is repeated with one double-hung sash on each side of the projecting bay. Below each window is a recessed panel and the bay is topped by a shed roof. The bay is

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situated to the right of center on the façade, with two symmetrically placed one-over-one double-hung sash to the left of the center. On the second story of this façade is paired sash windows above the projecting bay and two sash identical to the lower two, symmetrically placed above them. At the half-story level is a centered, paired window with segmental arches and a flat panel hood that mimics the shapes of those on the front façade. Centered above this paired window is a rectangular attic vent. Access to the partial basement under the house is also provided via an external bulkhead covered stairway from the north side, with steel doors.

South Elevation (side): The south side also contains matching cedar lap siding and a two-bay porch. The porch is on the same level as the front porch and has turned posts matching the front porch, but without the spindle work that exists on the front porch. There are two entrance doors from this porch. One is an entrance to the front parlor and the other to the cross-axial stair hall. First and Second floor two-over-two sash windows are not as symmetrically placed as on the north side; however, the half-story in the gable end has a paired window with attic vent above, identical to the north gable end.

West Elevation (rear): The rear side of the house also has similar cedar lap siding. It also contains a one-story, shed-roofed addition that was constructed in the 1950s with matching cedar lap siding. A small screen porch at the rear was also constructed as part of that addition. It was recently enclosed, with matching trim and siding. The second story has three symmetrically placed two-over-two double-hung sash windows and one smaller fixed, six-pane window. On the south roof slope are three gable dormers, symmetrically placed above the three second floor sash windows. There is no decorative Victorian trim on this façade.

There are a few surviving historic photographs of the exterior of the house in its original location on Duke of Gloucester Street. Two of them are included below. The pictures are from the John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library in Colonial Williamsburg. According to the library resources, the first photograph below is a view looking west on Duke of Gloucester Street and was “likely taken from the balcony or cupola of the Capitol, shortly before reconstruction of the street and removal of center island, January 15, 1934.” The Armistead House is shown on the right.

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Nivison, Frank, "Duke of Gloucester Street Looking West," *John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation*, accessed February 12, 2019, <https://rocklib.omeka.net/items/show/1827>.

According to the John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library, the second photo below shows President Franklin D. Roosevelt in his motorcade car "in front of the Capitol during the dedication ceremony for Duke of Gloucester Street in Williamsburg, Virginia, on October 20, 1934."



Nivison, Frank, "Dedication of Duke of Gloucester Street," *John D. Rockefeller Jr. Library, Colonial Williamsburg Foundation*, accessed February 12, 2019, <https://rocklib.omeka.net/items/show/1813>.

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## **Interior:**

### General:

The interior plan type is double-pile with a partial central passage, which serves as the formal foyer space. At the end of this partial central passage are entrances to the two rear rooms. The stair hall is perpendicular to the foyer on the south side, behind the southeast parlor. The cross-axial stair hall has an entrance door from the south façade porch. The first and second floors retain a high degree of integrity with much of the original trim remaining, including symmetrical door and window surrounds with bulls-eye corner blocks; marble and slate mantels/fireplace surrounds, beaded wainscot and chair rail plus a pair of large pocket doors off the main foyer. The original floorplan remains largely intact, particularly on the first floor.

All windows are original, with some restoration work having been implemented to make sure that the window weights and sashes operate properly. No original bathroom or kitchen fixtures remain. The original kitchen was located in the basement under the house when it was located on Duke of Gloucester Street. That original basement structure was partially dismantled by Colonial Williamsburg in connection with the restoration of the colonial coffeehouse after the Armistead House was moved to its current location.

While the interior woodwork, including trim, wainscoting and stairway are in good condition (as are all structural aspects of the building), the interior plasterwork of the Armistead House, when acquired by its present owner at its new location, was overall in poor condition as a result of the move. As a result of that damage to the plasterwork, the plasterwork has been removed. However, the move has had no impact on the Armistead House's historic integrity, and the present owners are intending to renovate the house in keeping with its Victorian roots, including for use possibly as a historic inn or residential purposes (consistent with its past uses) or for commercial rental purposes.

### First Floor:

The first two rooms off the central entry foyer and hall are two rooms, each with its own fireplace, which are both in very good condition (having minimal restoration work done), and each benefitting from a large pocket door from the main foyer. The room in the northeast corner of the house would presumably have been the main formal parlor, where tea would be served to guests and family photographs would have been proudly displayed. The mantel in this room is made of contrasting red and brown marble, with a cast iron firebox surround most often seen in coal burning fireplaces. It has a marble mantle shelf supported by simple pilasters. The center of the mantel frieze has a pentagon shaped medallion.

Across the hall, the room in the southeast corner of the house once served as the law office for Cary Peyton Armistead, a lawyer and head of the local Democratic Party. This room has its own dedicated entrance from the porch on the south side of the building, which clients would have used to help provide some separation between the law business and family life. The floors in this

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room have been replaced with oak flooring as part of repairs to the structural floor joists, as recommended by structural engineers following the relocation of the house. Except for this replaced flooring, and the flooring in the rear addition that was constructed in the 1950s, the flooring in the house is all original. The original fireplace mantel remains in this room and is in very good condition. Constructed of tan and black stone, it also includes a cast iron firebox surround for coal. The mantelshelf, frieze and pilasters are more decorative in this room, which is to be expected in a room that was more publically viewed.

The central foyer runs east to west, connecting to the main stairs servicing the top two floors and to two additional rooms on either side of the central hall and leading to the small addition at the rear. Both of the rear rooms have fireplaces, with mantles, in good condition. The room on the southwest side would have been used as the dining room, since it contains the small doors of a dumbwaiter, which lifted meals from the basement kitchen that existed when the house was at its original location on Duke of Gloucester Street. The fireplace in the dining room, also stone, has been painted white. Like the others, it includes a cast iron firebox surround. Paired brackets on each pilaster support the simple mantelshelf.

The adjacent room on the northwest side – the rear parlor room - benefits from the large rectangular bay window and well preserved mantel of red-brown marble with decorative inlay on the frieze and pilasters and identical cast iron firebox surround. The central foyer also connects to an entrance hall accessed via a door from the porch on the south side of the house, providing the family with an alternate entrance to the first floor.

#### Main Stairs:

The main stairway is open string and has two full landings, featuring heavy, hand-turned newel posts, typical of the period. The molded banister is supported by turned balustrades, two to each stair tread. Beaded wainscot ascends the stair along the wall and there is beaded paneling with chair board trim on the wall below the staircase. The first and second landing each have a window facing south.

#### Second Floor:

The second floor comprises four principal rooms that would have been the main bedrooms for the Armistead family – one bedroom over the formal first floor main front parlor, one bedroom over the rear parlor, one over the law office and one over the dining room.

Some of the door trim and doors on the second floor remains, as do both fireplace mantels in the second floor bedrooms as described below. The doors are all four panel wood doors that require some repair and redecorating. Some original door hardware also is intact.

Unlike all of the ornate and decorative stone fireplace mantels on the first floor, the two fireplace mantels on the second floor are made of wood. The wood mantel in the bedroom over the rear parlor, which is painted white and has a frieze of paired recessed panels and classically inspired

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pilasters with capitals punctuated with bulls-eye motifs. The wood mantel in the bedroom over the formal first floor main front parlor, which is painted red, has fluted pilasters, a capital with accentuated modillions, and a frieze punctuated with a row of small bulls-eye motifs. Like the fireplaces on the first floor, the fireboxes are shallow and were likely constructed exclusively for the burning of coal.

According to the book, *Laura Ashley at Home: Six Family Homes and Their Transformation*, published by Harmony Books in 1992, which features the house and its history in remarkable detail, the master bedroom, which was used by Cary and Eudora Armistead (and later by Miss Dora after the passing of Cary and Eudora) was the second floor room that is located over the formal parlor in the northeast corner of the house. The boys' room was behind the master bedroom above the first floor rear parlor in the northwest corner of the house. The room over the law office was used as a guest bedroom while the girls shared the bedroom over the dining room. According to the Laura Ashley book, a small nursery room was located off the master bedroom.

#### The Attic:

The attic, located on the third floor and accessed by the main staircase, consists of three rooms and a storage room. According to Laura Ashley's book, Cara Armistead occupied the attic towards the end of her life. The principal surviving detail on the third floor, apart from some original four panel wood doors that need repair and redecoration, are two banks of wood cabinets that have been constructed to extend into the eaves under the dormer windows in the two front rooms facing North Henry Street. They have plain flat fronted doors and small metal latches. The chimney flues also join at the top of the stairwell on the third floor and exit the roof of the house as a single chimney.

#### **Integrity Analysis**

The architectural integrity of the Armistead House is high. The original floor plan remains largely intact, particularly on the first floor, and the exterior porches and classic spire still reflect their 1890s Victorian flair. Almost all of the original windows and exterior doors remain. Likewise, the interior floors, trim, mantels, stairs and flooring are almost completely intact and in very good condition. This high degree of architectural integrity invokes the feel and associations that were present during the late Victorian period. Although the house is not on its original city lot, its relocation to a nearby city lot among dwellings from the same time period still provide some sense of integrity of location and setting.

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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- B. Removed from its original location
- C. A birthplace or grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)  
ARCHITECTURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**  
1890

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**  
1890

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**  
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)  
N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**  
N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**  
Unknown

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Dora Armistead House is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture, because it is a fine example of Victorian period architecture in the City of Williamsburg. The period of significance is 1890, the date of the construction of the house. The Armistead House meets criterion consideration B because, despite its relocation from Duke of Gloucester Street to North Henry Street, its architectural significance includes its survivorship as one the best examples of late Victorian architecture in the City of Williamsburg. The house still conveys its historic architectural features on its new location. The move was necessary in order to insure its future preservation. The move of the house in 1995 was the culmination of a long and arduous relationship between the Armistead family and the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation (CWF) that began in the mid-1920s. The presence of the Armistead House in the heart of the Williamsburg restoration, the research of the site under the house, and its ultimate move and preservation are representative of the preservation philosophy that was born in the early twentieth century by the efforts of Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr, and Dr. William Archer Rutherford Goodwin, which set the course for the restoration of the colonial capital for decades.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

### **Criterion C: Architecture**

The Armistead House is locally significant under Criterion C in the area of architecture. The house is a fine example of Victorian architecture, perhaps the finest example remaining in the City of Williamsburg. The house contains important features and characteristics that are typical of late Queen Anne style homes, as detailed in, *Classic Commonwealth: Virginia Architecture from the Colonial Era to 1940*, a style guide published by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, but with a nod to Gothic revival and vernacular farmhouse styles. When the Armistead House was built, Queen Anne architecture, with its eclectic and sometimes whimsical detailing, was at its height of popularity in Virginia. To spend money on highly decorative detailing was not only an expression of embracing the latest style, but also an expression of the wealth of the owner. In the former capital of the Virginia colony, now a sleepy college town, this was a look forward instead of backward by a deep-rooted family of the area.

Those classic Victorian-era features of the Armistead House include:

- Balloon frame construction;
- A single dominant gable;
- Porches on multiple sides with decorative millwork;

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- Preserved beaded wainscot and chair rail and a pair of large pocket doors off the main foyer;
- Symmetrical surrounds with corner blocks;
- marble and slate mantels/fireplace surrounds;
- Flat wall surfaces broken by projections (such as the bay window on the north side of the house);
- Exuberant ornament including spindle work and turned or spindled columns;
- Steeply pitched complex roofs which are gabled and hipped; and
- Tall chimneys.

The architectural significance of the Armistead House is further supported by the fact that, as noted above, in the middle of the 1980s the Armistead family heirs leased the house to Preservation Virginia (then known as the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (APVA) so that it could be used as a museum highlighting the Victorian period. The APVA itself was established in 1889, approximately one year before the construction of the Armistead House. Reportedly, Cary Peyton Armistead, their father, was a founding member of the APVA. In 1985, the APVA engaged Laura Ashley Inc. to redecorate the house in its classic Victorian style. The museum opened in 1986 as a display of classic late 19th century architecture and decoration, and is one of the houses discussed in detail in Laura Ashley's book, *Laura Ashley at Home: Six Family Homes and Their Transformation*, published by Harmony Books in 1992. The museum operated from 1986 until 1993.

The Armistead House is also a rare survivor of late nineteenth century architecture that once stood in the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation's restoration area. The vision of Dr. William Archer Rutherford Goodwin to restore Williamsburg to its Colonial Period appearance, backed by the generous philanthropy of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., became one of the largest restoration projects ever undertaken and it began with the purchase and removal of all buildings not built in the eighteenth century or before. A persuasive salesperson, Goodwin was able to purchase most of the parcels along the main thoroughfares shown on "The Frenchman's Map" drawn in 1782 by French cartographers following the victory against Cornwallis at Yorktown<sup>1</sup>. Duke of Gloucester Street, where the Armistead House was located, was a key street in the restoration, with the Wren Building at one end and the site of the Colonial Capitol at the other. Numerous nineteenth and twentieth century buildings were demolished or relocated outside of this core multi-block area. The refusal of the Armisteads to sell for nearly 75 years, followed by their diligent negotiations with the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation to preserve the house on a new location, allowed for the survival of this fine example of Victorian architecture.

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<sup>1</sup> George Humphrey Yetter. *Williamsburg Before and After: The Rebirth of Virginia's Colonial Capital*. The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. 1988. p. 16.

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## Background History

The house was constructed in 1890 by Cary Peyton Armistead, a lawyer and head of the local Democratic Party, for his family, including his wife, Eudora, and their family of five children. His father, Robert Henry Armistead, was a landholder who owned much of the area surrounding the Governor's Palace in Williamsburg. By 1889, Cary Peyton Armistead had purchased what was known at the time as the Morrison House. Formerly the colonial era Richard Charlton's Coffeehouse, Armistead removed the eighteenth century building, incorporating parts of it into the construction of his new home, including a significant amount of the original foundation. The newly constructed house served Cary Peyton Armistead as his primary residence and law office until his death in 1901. The southwest parlor, with a separate entrance, was his office space.

Cary Peyton Armistead's two daughters, Dora and Cara, never married and were the last survivors of Cary and Eudora Armistead's five children (three boys and two girls). Dora and Cara lived in the house throughout their lives, well into the third quarter of the twentieth century. Cara died before Dora and the house became known as the "Dora Armistead House," presumably to distinguish it from the Greek Revival Bowden-Armistead House, also located on Duke of Gloucester Street.

With the onset of the restoration of Williamsburg to the colonial period, Rockefeller, through his local agent, W. A. R. Goodwin, set about to purchase all the property within the Colonial capital. This effort involved the demolition of all buildings built after the Colonial period and the subsequent reconstruction of former colonial period buildings. Prominently located on Duke of Gloucester Street, almost immediately adjacent to the original Colonial Capitol building, the Armistead parcel was highly sought after for purchase. Refusing to sell, the Armistead's home became the sole survivor of post-Colonial architecture in a recreated historic landscape and a cause of disagreement between Armistead heirs and the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation for decades. From the 1940s through the late 1970s, Cara Armistead rented rooms in the house to tourists, thus capitalizing on their prime location in the historic area. Dora Armistead, also living in the house, was a teacher.

After Dora's death in 1983, the Armistead heirs leased the house in 1985 to the Association for Preservation of Virginia Antiquities (APVA), now known as Preservation Virginia. It was decorated by Laura Ashley, Inc. in keeping with the Victorian roots of the house and was subsequently operated by the APVA as a museum of late 19<sup>th</sup> century architecture and decoration until 1993. This is well-documented in the book, *Laura Ashley at Home: Six Family Homes and Their Transformation*, published by Harmony Books in 1992, in which the interior and exterior architecture of the Armistead House feature strongly.

Following the closure by the APVA of the Victorian-era museum, the lot on which the house stood was leased to CWF by heir, Judge Robert T. Armistead. Judge Armistead and his wife, Sarah, gifted the house to the Foundation on the condition it be moved to other land owned by the Foundation. Because the house was not in keeping with the period of the restored colonial

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capital and because of its desire to restore the colonial period Charlton Coffeehouse, CWF moved the house to its present location on North Henry Street in 1995. This met the stipulation of the agreement and gift.<sup>2</sup> Two pictures showing the process of moving the house from Duke of Gloucester Street are included below.



Moving the Armistead house.

This photograph was included in an article published by CWF entitled “Exploring the Coffeehouse” by Edward Chappell (<http://www.history.org/foundation/journal/winter10/exploring.cfm>).



This photograph was taken by the author from photos that are included in the exhibit of the original construction and reconstruction of the Colonial coffeehouse located in the reconstructed Public Hospital of 1773 in Colonial Williamsburg, the first mental hospital in North America.

<sup>2</sup> Colonial Lot 58 Historical Report, Block 17 Buildings 1 & 2: Coffeehouse and Burdett’s Ordinary” by Patricia A. Gibbs, 1996, pages 4 and 7, originally entitled: Cary Peyton Armistead House Site (1890-1995) and Burdett’s Ordinary (Reconstructed 1941-1942).

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The relocation enabled CWF to excavate the site for purposes of identifying and possibly reconstructing the colonial period Charlton's Coffeehouse. This former building was a key component to the Williamsburg story from the period prior to the Revolution. According to the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation archive research reports,<sup>3</sup> "George Washington frequented Charlton's tavern between 1767 and 1774. Thomas Jefferson was another customer. His account books show frequent visits to the 'Coffeehouse' when he was in Williamsburg" between 1767 and 1775. In addition, Lt. Governor Francis Fauquier reported, in 1765, that he was confronted by an anti-Stamp Act mob on the front porch of the coffeehouse.

Dendrochronology studies of wood fragments in the Armistead House revealed the reuse of numerous framing members from the former coffeehouse. According to press reports,<sup>4</sup>

Architectural historians found more than a hundred eighteenth-century building fragments recycled in the 1890s Cary Peyton Armistead House standing on the site of Richard Charlton's Coffeehouse near the Capitol. The coffeehouse was demolished just before the Armistead House's construction, but are pieces of its framing and woodwork from the coffeehouse, or from some other eighteenth-century structure? Asked to date the framing, Heikkenen found it to have been cut in 1749, matching nicely with a 1750 description of the coffeehouse as "lately Built." Much of what is known about Charlton's comes from the fragments, now pieced together with the aid of computers.

Many of those colonial-era fragments were removed and used by CWF in its efforts to reconstruct Richard Charlton's Coffeehouse, which has now been completed. A few fragments remain in the Armistead House (e.g., some of the floor joists supporting the first floor of the Armistead House) but are not readily visible.

The new site on North Henry Street was an appropriate setting for the Victorian Armistead House. According to information contained in the 2006 Williamsburg Comprehensive Plan, the area south of Scotland Street was developed in the early 1900s "*with fashionable Vernacular Victorian and Queen Anne style houses*". However, the plan states that "*from this turn of the century era, only 14 houses still stand*". In the immediate area today, there are still a number of houses of roughly the same era. Furthermore, according to the 2006 plan, the land between Scotland Street and the railroad (which includes the present Armistead House parcel) was subdivided from the "Wheatland" farm in 1894 and was known as the "Northington tract." Indeed, the legal description of the present site for the Armistead House is "Lot 5 in the Northington Block." Chapter 10, page 3, of the comprehensive plan states that this tract was further subdivided by Francis O'Keefe, the father of artist Georgia O'Keefe, throughout the late 1890s and early 1900s. Wheatlands was owned by the O'Keefe family until 1907, when it was sold to Dr. John Henderson. Research reports in the Colonial Williamsburg foundation archives

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<sup>3</sup> Colonial Lot 58 Historical Report, Block 17 Buildings 1 & 2: Coffeehouse and Burdett's Ordinary" by Patricia A. Gibbs, 1996, pages 4 and 7, originally entitled: Cary Peyton Armistead House Site (1890-1995) and Burdett's Ordinary (Reconstructed 1941-1942).

<sup>4</sup> "Peering into the Rings of Grain" – CW Journal, Spring 2002.

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confirm a house known as “Wheatlands” was constructed in the 1840s on the current Armistead House parcel. Colonial Williamsburg acquired the Wheatlands house in 1950 and it was demolished in 1968.<sup>5</sup> Prior to the relocation of the Armistead House, archaeological investigations examined the surviving foundation and cellar of Wheatlands, which were subsequently destroyed and the site graded for the Armistead House.<sup>6</sup>

CWF continued its investigations of the Armistead House after its move looking for evidence of the incorporation of fragments of the colonial coffeehouse. As reported above, several hundred have been identified including, in November 2006, large pieces of interior and exterior trim and doors, including some doors with evidence of the early paint colors.<sup>7</sup> The house, while of superior Victorian architecture, provides a fascinating link to the colonial period given the use in its construction of multiple pieces of the colonial era coffeehouse that stood on or near the original location of the house. Those pieces provided clues that were vital to the reconstruction of the coffeehouse by Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

Consistent with CWF’s decades-long effort to fully complete the streetscape near the Colonial Capital building and all along Duke of Gloucester Street in particular, the coffeehouse has since been fully reconstructed and is now open for visitors. The Armistead House was among the last non-colonial period structures on Duke of Gloucester Street, and the relocation enabled CWF to complete its transformative restoration efforts on that street. CWF has carefully and exhaustively documented those efforts, including several articles and photos referenced herein that document the importance of the Armistead House in achieving its goal. The relocation of the Armistead House was one of the last pieces of that puzzle. There is an extensive exhibit of the history of the original building and reconstruction of the coffeehouse, including the relocation of the Armistead House. On display are the multitude of artifacts that were recovered from the Armistead House and used to help recreate the coffeehouse. The exhibit is currently located in the reconstructed Public Hospital in Colonial Williamsburg, the first public mental hospital in North America.

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<sup>5</sup> A Phase II Archaeological Evaluation of Site 44WB76 Associated with the Proposed Development of the Northington Block, Williamsburg, Virginia” by Elizabeth J. Grzymala, October 1996, page 14.

<sup>6</sup> A Phase II Archaeological Evaluation of Site 44WB76, page 16.

<sup>7</sup> “Exploring the Coffeehouse” by Edward Chappell, CW Journal, Winter 2010, <http://www.history.org/foundation/journal/winter10/exploring.cfm>.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

- 2006 Williamsburg Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 10, Page 3.
- “Exploring the Coffeehouse” by Edward Chappell, CW Journal, Winter 2010 (<http://www.history.org/foundation/journal/winter10/exploring.cfm>)
- “R. Charlton’s Coffeehouse” by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, <https://www.history.org/almanack/places/hb/hbcoffee.cfm>
- “Peering into the Rings of Grain” by Michael Olmert, CW Journal, Spring 2002 (<http://www.history.org/Foundation/journal/Spring02/dendro.cfm>).
- “Williamsburg again has an R. Charlton’s Coffeehouse” by Michael Olmert, CW Journal, Winter 2010 (<http://www.history.org/Foundation/journal/Winter10/coffeehouse.cfm>).
- “A Phase II Archaeological Evaluation of Site 44WB76 Associated with the Proposed Development of the Northington Block, Williamsburg, Virginia” by Elizabeth J. Grzymala, October 1996
- “Colonial Lot 58 Historical Report, Block 17 Buildings 1 & 2: Coffeehouse and Burdett’s Ordinary” by Patricia A. Gibbs, 1996, page 4, originally entitled: Cary Peyton Armistead House Site (1890-1995) and Burdett’s Ordinary (Reconstructed 1941-1942)
- Classic Commonwealth: Virginia Architecture from the Colonial Era to 1940, a style guide published by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources
- Laura Ashley at Home: Six Family Homes and Their Transformation, by Nick Ashley, Fayal Greene, Catherine Haig, Susan Irvine and Paula Rice Jackson, published by Harmony Books in 1992
- Williamsburg Facts & Fiction, 1900- 1950, by Ed Belvin
- Hosmer, Charles B., Jr. Preservation Comes of Age: From Williamsburg to the National Trust, 1926 – 1949. Volume 1. Charlottesville: The University of Virginia Press. 1981

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- Yetter, George Humphrey. Williamsburg Before and After: The Rebirth of Virginia's Colonial Capital. Williamsburg: The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. 1988.
- Yetter, George Humphrey and Carl Lounsbury. Restoring Williamsburg. Williamsburg: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. 2019.

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested  
 previously listed in the National Register  
 previously determined eligible by the National Register  
 designated a National Historic Landmark  
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
Name of repository: Department of Historic Resources, Richmond, VA

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** DHR No. 137-0142

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** 0.186 acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |                        |                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Latitude: 37.274141 | Longitude: -76.706338 |
| 2. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |
| 3. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |
| 4. Latitude:           | Longitude:            |

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**Or**

**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |          |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 2. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting:  | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundaries of the lot on which the Armistead House sits coincide with the perimeters of legal tax parcel number 465-13-00-005 as recorded by the City of Williamsburg (i.e., Northington Block Lot 5). The true and correct historic boundary is shown on the attached Location Map and Tax Parcel Map.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The historic boundary encompasses the tax parcel where the Armistead House has been located since it was relocated in 1995. The boundary is drawn to capture the property's current setting. Other than the dwelling, no other known historic resources are included within the boundary.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Dennis B. Nordstrom, manager and Elizabeth Hoge Lipford, DHR staff

organization: Armistead House LLC

street & number: 1710 Mason Lane

city or town: Charlottesville state: VA zip code: 22903

e-mail: dbnordstrom@gmail.com

telephone: 843-822-2251

date: March 1, 2020

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**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

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- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Armistead House

City or Vicinity: City of Williamsburg

County: Independent City State: VA

Photographer: Dennis B. Nordstrom

Date Photographed: December 24, 2018

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 18. Photo of east facade. Camera is facing west.

2 of 18. Photo of the east facade and south side of the house. Camera is facing northwest.

3 of 18. Photo of west (rear) side of the house. Camera is facing east.

4 of 18. Photo of north side of the house. Camera is facing south.

5 of 18. Photo of the west (rear) and south sides of the house. Camera is facing northeast.

6 of 18. Photo of the south side of the house. Camera is facing north.

7 of 18. Photo of a fireplace in a first-floor room of the house. Camera is facing east toward North Henry Street.

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8 of 18. Photo of fireplace in the first-floor southeast parlor. Camera is facing west toward the rear of the house.

9 of 18. Photo of fireplace in the first-floor northeast room of the house. Camera is facing west toward the rear of the house.

10 of 17. Photo of central staircase, wainscot and trim. Camera is generally facing north.

11 of 18. Photo of central staircase, wainscot and trim. Camera is generally facing south.

12 of 18. Photo looking down the central staircase from the second floor landing. Camera is facing north.

13 of 18. Photo of fireplace in second-floor room. Camera is generally facing east toward North Henry Street.

14 of 18. Photo of first-floor northeast parlor facing North Henry Street, showing preserved wainscot and trim for re-installation. Camera is generally facing northeast.

15 of 18. Photo of second floor, showing preserved flooring, trim, wainscot, and staircase. Camera is generally facing north.

16 of 18. Photo of third-floor room, showing preserved flooring and some cabinetry. Camera is generally facing northeast.

17 of 18. Photo of central first-floor entry hall, showing preserved front double doors and two large pocket doors on either side leading to parlor rooms on each side. Camera is generally facing east.

18 of 18. Photo of dining room mantel. Camera is facing southeast.

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.